

Message Text

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BANGKOK EYES ONLY FOR CHAIRMAN WOLFF

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR SHUM KS US
SUBJ: ROK COMMENTARY ON CODEL WOLFF VISIT

SUMMARY. ON APRIL 13, VICE FOREIGN MINISTER YOON DELIVERED
ROK'S OFFICIAL EXPRESSIONS OF PLEASURE WITH CODEL WOLFF
VISIT AND AT SAME TIME COMMENTED ON THE ACTIVITIES OF JOHN
SALZBERG. END SUMMARY.

1. AT THE REQUEST OF VICE FOREIGN MINISTER YOON,
DCM CALLED ON HIM LATE WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON. THE MEETING
BEGAN WITH YOON EXPRESSING AT SOME LENGTH HIS GOVERNMENT'S
PLEASURE WITH THE RESULTS OF THE VISIT OF CODEL WOLFF. HE
POINTED OUT THAT THE VISIT PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY TO
EXCHANGE MANY USEFUL VIEWS AND STATED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT
FELT THAT THE VISIT HAD CONTRIBUTED TO STRENGTHENING
FURTHER THE FRIENDLY TIES BETWEEN THE ROK AND THE U.S.
HE THANKED THE EMBASSY FOR ITS EFFORTS TO INSURE A
SUCCESSFUL VISIT.

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2. HE THEN WENT ON TO COMMENT THAT THE ACTIVITIES OF
JOHN SALZBERG WERE NOT CONSISTENT WITH THE EFFORTS OF
THE REST OF THE DELEGATION AND DID NOT SEEM TO BE RELATED
TO THE MAIN PURPOSES OF THE VISIT. MR. SALZBERG'S
CONVERSATIONS BORE NO RELATIONSHIP TO A REVIEW OF THE
POLITICAL-MILITARY SITUATION IN KOREA AND THE NEEDS OF
THE ROK FOR MILITARY ASSISTANCE.

3. IN RESPONSE TO THE DCM'S COMMENTS THAT MR. SALZBERG'S ABILITY TO SEE THOSE KOREANS THAT HE WISHED TO SEE WAS FAVORABLE NOTICED, YOON SAID THAT THE ROK WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN SO DISCOURTEOUS AS TO BLOCK A FOREIGN OFFICIAL FROM VISITING THOSE PEOPLE THE HE WOULD WISH. NEVERTHELESS, THE ROK WAS CONCERNED BY MR. SALZBERG'S PROGRAM, PARTICULARLY HIS EFFORTS TOSEE ALL OF MYONGDONG DEFENDENTS NOT IN CUSTODY. IT FELT THAT SUCH ACTIVITIES WERE NOT HELPFUL TO THE CLOSE RELATIONSHIP THAT BOTH GOVERNMENTS WISH TO ENGENDER, URGING THIS PATTERN NOT BE FOLLOWED IN FUTURE BY ANY MEMBER OF AN OFFICIAL U.S. DELEGATION. HE STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF AVOIDING SEMBLANCE OF PUBLIC PRESSURE ON ROKG ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE, WHILE IMPLYING PRIVATE PRACTICES PREFERABLE.

4. YOON ALSO NOTED THAT EMBASSY HAD NOT BEEN INVOLVED IN ARRANGING MR. SALZBERG'S SCHEDULE.

5. BOTH DURING AND AT THE END OF THE CONVERSATION, DCM MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A. MR. SALZBERG WAS NOT AN OFFICIAL OF THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION NOR IS HE AN ELECTED MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN LEGISLATIVE BRANCH. NEVERTHELESS, HE WAS A REPRESENTATIVE OF A VERY IMPORTANT CONGRESSMAN, WHOSE INTEREST IN KOREAN HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION WAS WELL KNOWN TO THE ROK

B. THE FACT THAT MR. SALZBERG HAD FREE ACCESS
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TO THE MYONGDONG DEFENDANTS WAS VERY FAVORABLY NOTICED.

C. PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANTLY OF ALL, THE DCM HOPED THAT MR. SALZBERG'S ACTIVITIES WOULD NOT INTERFERE WITH WHATEVER CONSIDERATIONS THE ROK MAY BE GIVING AT THIS TIME TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN KOREA.

5. COMMENT: IT IS QUITE CLEAR THAT THE ROK IS CAUGHT ON THE HORNS OF A DILEMMA. ON THE ONE HAND, THEY RECOGNIZE THAT THE CODEL WOLFF VISIT, WHICH INCLUDED ACCESS TO SEVERAL MYONGDONG DEFENDENTS, WAS A GREAT SUCCESS AND THAT THEREFORE IT COULD NOT AFFORD TO MAR THAT VISIT WITH ANY SHOW OF UNHAPPINESS ABOUT MR. SALZBERG'S ACTIVITIES. ON THE OTHER HAND, ROK UNDOUBTEDLY FELT IT COULD NOT PERMIT SALZBERG'S PROGRAM IN SEOUL TO GO UNNOTICED. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT ITS CONCERN IS NOT WITH MR. SALZBERG BUT WITH POSSIBLE VISIT OF STAFF MEMBERS OF THE FASER SUBCOMMITTEE. ROKG ALSO UNDOUBTEDLY WISHED TO RE-EMPHASIZE

ITS CONCERN WITH PUBLIC PRESSURE AND POINT OUT AGAIN THE

COUNTER-PRODUCTIVENESS OF SUCH APPROACH.
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